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NEWS RELEASE

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UTAH TO HOST NATIONAL ABANDONED MINE CONFERENCE

In just the last four years nearly 100 people in the United States have lost their lives in accidents at abandoned mines. In September people who work diligently to prevent these tragedies will gather in Park City for the 24th Annual National Association of Abandoned Mine Land Programs Conference. The Utah Division of Oil, Gas and Mining will host the Conference at the Yarrow Hotel, September 15 through 18, 2002.

A current tax on coal production funds twenty-six state and three Native American abandoned mine reclamation programs. They operate under the auspices of the Office of Surface Mining.

“The Association provides a forum to address current issues, discuss common problems, and share new abandoned mined land technology,” explained Mark Mesch, administrator of Utah’s Abandoned Mine Program. “It fosters positive and productive relationships between states, tribes, and the Federal Government.”

Keynote speaker at the event will be Utahn Dave Lauriski, Assistant Secretary, Mine Safety and Health Administration. President Bush appointed Lauriski, who was involved in coal mining in Carbon and Emery Counties for many years, to the position in 1999.

Representatives from across the nation will participate in technical sessions, field trips, and workshops. On Monday, September 16, at 7:30 p.m., Phil Notarianni, Acting Associate Director of the Division of State History, and Associate Professor Lecturer at the University of Utah, will present “Utah’s Mining Heritage.” The public is invited to attend free of charge.

“Utah has a rich and fascinating mining history,” said Mesch. “I hope the public will take this opportunity to join with us in learning more about the part this industry played in our past.”

For more information contact Luci Malin, conference co-chair, at 801-538-5323.

